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BURIAL ECCENTRICITIES.

IN all times and countries there have been queer notions about burial. We here offer to our readers a few instances of this kind of eccentricity.

Mr Wilkinson, one of the founders of the iron manufacture in Great Britain, loved iron so well that he resolved to carry it to the grave with him. He had himself buried in his garden in an iron coffin, over which was an iron tomb of twenty tons' weight. In order to make all right and secure, he caused the coffin and tomb to be constructed while he was yet alive; he delighted to shew them to his friends and visitors—possibly more to his pleasure than theirs. But there were sundry little tribulations to encounter. When he died, it was found that the coffin was too small; he was temporarily laid in the ground while a new one was made; when buried, it was decided that the coffin was too near the surface, and it was therefore transferred to a cavity dug in a rock; lastly, when the estate was sold many years afterwards, the family directed the coffin to be transferred to the churchyard. Thus Mr Wilkinson had the exceptional honour of being buried three or four times over. Mr Smiles tells us that, in 1862, a man was living who had assisted at all these interments. Mr Wilkinson was quite pleased to make presents of iron coffins to any friends who wished to possess such mementos of death and iron. In a granite county such as Cornwall, it is not surprising to read that the Rev. John Pomeroy, of St Kew, was buried in a granite coffin which he had caused to be made.

Some persons have had a singular taste for providing their coffins long beforehand, and keeping them as objects pleasant to look at, or morally profitable as reminders of the fate of all, or useful for everyday purposes until the last and solemn use supervenes. A slater in Fifeshire, about forty years ago, made his own coffin, decorated it with shells, and displayed it among other fancy shell-work in a room he called his grotto. Another North Briton, a cartwright, made his own coffin, and used it for a long time to hold his working

tools; it was filled with sliding shelves, and the lid turned upon hinges. It is said that many instances are met with in Scotland of working men constructing their own coffins 'in leisure hours.' Alderman Jones of Gloucester, about the close of the seventeenth century, had his coffin and his monument constructed beforehand; not liking the shape of the nose carved on his effigy on the latter, he had a new one cut—just in time, for he died immediately after it was finished. One John Wheatley of Nottingham bought a coffin, and filled it with clove cordial; but he brought himself into bad repute by getting drunk too frequently, for his coffin became to him a sort of dram-shop. A young navy surgeon, who accompanied the Duke of Clarence (afterwards King William IV.) when he first went to sea as a royal midddy, rose in after-life to an important position at Portsmouth; he had a favourite boat converted into a coffin, with the stern-piece fixed at its head, and kept it under his bed for many years. A married couple in Prussia provided themselves with coffins beforehand, and kept them in a stable, where they were utilised as cupboards for the reception of various kinds of food; but the final appropriation of the coffins was marked by a singular *contre-temps*. The man died; the widow packed the contents of both coffins into one; while the body was deposited in the other. By some mishap, the coffin full of eatables was lowered into the grave. Next day the widow opening the lid of the (supposed) cupboard, was scared at finding the dead body of her husband. Of course the interment had to be done all over again, with an interchange of coffins.

The custom of being buried in an erect position has been frequently carried out. Ben Jonson was buried upright in Westminster Abbey, a circumstance which gave occasion for the following lines in the *Ingoldsby Legends*:

Even rare Ben Jonson, that famous wight,
I am told is interred there bolt upright,
In just such a posture, beneath his bust,
As Tray used to sit in to beg for a crust.

Military heroes have in more cases than one been buried by their men in upright positions on

the battle-field, sometimes lance or spear in hand. One such was found at the Curragh of Kildare; on opening an earthen tumulus, the skeleton of an old Irish chieftain was seen upright, with a barbed spear in or near one hand.

It is of course quite easy to bury in an upright posture, by setting up the coffin on end; but where, as in many recorded instances, the body is placed in sitting posture, coffins were of necessity inadmissible. When the Emperor Frederick Barossa opened the tomb of Charlemagne at Aix-la-Chapelle, he found the body of the great man seated on a kind of throne, as if alive, clad in imperial robes, bearing his sceptre in one hand and a copy of the Bible on his knees. At Shore-ditch churchyard, some years ago, a tomb could be seen from the high-road, placed there by a quack doctor named Dr John Gardiner. Or rather it was a high head-stone, with an inscription denoting that the inclosed spot was his 'last and best bedroom;' he had the tomb and the inscription prepared some years before his death, and was (so rumour stated) buried in a sitting posture; but on this last point the evidence is not clear.

Some folks have been buried with a mere apology for a coffin. Such was the fate of Mrs Fisher Dilke, during the time of the Commonwealth. Her husband, Mr Dilke, did not seem to regard her remains as deserving of a very high expenditure. He caused a coffin to be made from boards which lined his barn. He bargained with a sexton to make a grave in the churchyard for one groat; two groats cheaper than if it had been in the church. He invited eight neighbours to act as bearers, for whom he provided three twopenny cakes and a bottle of claret. He read a chapter of Job to them while all was being got ready; then the cakes and wine were partaken of, and the body carried to the churchyard; they put her in the grave, each threw in a spadeful of earth; and the bereaved husband and his neighbours retraced their steps. Another instance of an apology for coffins was that near Horsham, in an old mansion which had been a nunnery; when, on one occasion, the kitchen floor was taken up, there were found twelve skeletons all in a row, each between two planks; they were supposed to have been nuns.

And some folks have been buried without any coffin at all. A military officer, some half-century or so ago, directed by his will that his body should be opened by medical men, bound round with cere-cloth, and interred without a coffin in a particular part of his park. Acorns were to be sown on the spot, the most promising plant from which was to be allowed to grow there, 'in order,' as he said, 'that his remains might be useful in nourishing a sturdy British oak.' He left a legacy to his gardener to weed and water the plant. A goodly-sized oak-tree now marks the spot. This reminds one of the strange burial, or rather absence of burial, in the case of Jeremy Bentham, the celebrated jurist and philosopher. In accordance with

his will, a head of wax was affixed to his skeleton (after dissection); the figure was stuffed to the proper size, and clad in Bentham's own garments; he was placed seated in his own arm-chair, with his own walking-stick in one hand. A wag made a very whimsical anagram out of this, by simply transposing two letters in Jeremy Bentham's name—'Jeer my bent ham.'

Miscellaneous instances crowd upon us of burial without coffins. There is a parish in the Isle of Thanet the register of which contains entries of eightpence for burying in a coffin, and sixpence without a coffin; and in the register of an adjoining parish (more than two centuries back), eightpence 'in a coffined grave,' and sixpence 'in a sheet.' About a century ago, in Dorset, a gentleman directed that his uncoffined remains should be buried ten feet deep in a particular field lying near his house, and the field to be then thoroughly ploughed over, as if to obliterate him as completely as could well be the case. The family of the St Clairs of Rosslyn were for many generations (the men at anyrate) buried without coffins. The latest of such burials took place towards the close of the seventeenth century. When the vault was next opened, the body of Sir William St Clair was seen lying in his armour with a red velvet cap on his head; nothing was decayed but a part of the white fur-edging to the cap. In some parts of Ireland it was at one time customary to carry the body to the grave-side in a coffin, upon which the body was taken out and reverently deposited in the earth. There was one Augustinian abbey graveyard in particular, near Enniscorthy, in which certain families were generally buried in this fashion, the graves being scrupulously prepared with boards, earth, sods, and grass. It is said that the Superior of the first Cistercian abbey founded in England since the Reformation lies buried in this fashion in the chapter-house of the abbey in one of the midland counties. Mr Thomas Cooke, a merchant who had well befriended Morden College, Blackheath, directed that his body should be buried in a winding-sheet, *minus* coffin, in the college grounds.

And as some people have been buried without coffins, so have there been instances of coffins buried without people. Fraud, more or less, may be suspected in such cases. About a dozen years ago the death of a foreigner was entered in the register of an Essex parish on the faith of a medical certificate, apparently authentic; a coffin was bought; and a grave ordered to be dug in a Roman Catholic graveyard. The funeral, or *a* funeral, took place, all in decent order. A few weeks afterwards a claim was put in by the widow for a hundred thousand francs, due from an insurance office. The (alleged) deceased was known to have been a fugitive fraudulent bankrupt. The aid of the detective police being obtained, the grave and coffin were opened, and—no corpse was there. The rascal had made out the certificate of his own death, ordered his own grave and coffin, and

followed his own coffin to its last home as chief mourner!

With or without coffins, many persons have been buried in spots other than churchyards or graveyards; such, for instance, as in their own gardens, farms, parks, or plantations. There is a family residence in Northamptonshire marked by the singularity of having a coffin placed as it were a table in a summer-house. Sir William Temple, before his death in 1700, ordered his heart to be inclosed in a silver casket, and buried under a sun-dial in his own garden at Moor Park, opposite a particular window. Where the body was interred we have no record. William Liberty, a brick-maker in Herts, was buried in a tomb constructed by himself at the side of a lonely footpath across a field; and room was afterwards found in the same tomb for his widow. Sir James Tillie, of Pentillie Castle, Cornwall, was at his own desire laid under a tower in a summer-house in a favourite part of his park. Baskerville the printer was buried under a windmill near his garden; a dancing-master in a plantation near Macclesfield; a barrister beneath a tower which he had built at Leith Hill, Surrey; a Yorkshire squire in his own shrubbery, 'because he had passed some of the happiest hours of his life there;' a shepherd of the Chiltern Hills on the chalky slopes of the hills themselves, with an inscription cut in the grassy covering. The wish of a captain in Cromwell's army to bury his favourite charger in the churchyard of Houghton-le-Spring, was frustrated; whereupon he had it buried in his own orchard, and left orders that he himself was to be buried by the side of the horse. The editor of a Newcastle journal was buried in his own garden; and a Northumbrian gentleman under a tomb in his own orchard. Körner, the German soldier-poet who fell at Gadebusch, was buried on the spot under an old oak; and many military men have found a similar resting-place.

Many queer stories are extant, resting, however, on tolerably good authority, of bodies being left unburied, or in some way or other kept above-ground, in the hope of cunningly defeating some law or other. The old stage-coachmen on the Great North Road, when driving through Stevenage, were wont to point to a barn in which the body of a former owner, Mr Trigg, was kept; it was inclosed in lead, and placed upon a beam of the roof. The gossips of the neighbourhood had two theories to explain this. One was to the effect that Trigg had expressed a desire that his body should be kept there 'until the day of judgment;' the other, that he believed he would return to life again thirty years after his death, and left his property subject to this contingency. He died in 1721. After the thirty years his representatives 'gave him three days' grace,' then buried him, and finally disposed of his property. Just about a century ago, a legacy of twenty-five pounds a year was left to a woman 'so long as she remained above-ground.' Her husband, on her death, put a crafty interpretation on these words; he rented a small room in a neighbour's house, and kept the body there in a coffin during the long period of nineteen years, receiving the annuity because the woman was still 'above-ground.' A gentleman, rather earlier in the same century, left orders that, when dead, he should be placed in a coffin perched up on end in a cellar. He had bequeathed all his

property to charitable uses, and had a notion that his relatives would try to defy the will unless his body were kept unburied; that is, not actually interred in the ground.

FROM DAWN TO SUNSET.

PART II.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

Two winters shed their snows, two summers spread their blooms round Enderby; and old Time, who gives and takes so much, turned his hour-glass, and the sands ran on. Beauty, hoar hairs, the feeble tired heart of age, the fresh and throbbing heart of youth, all bend to the death-sweep of his sickle. But his loans to the living are rich and rare; though he scathes and saddens, he seldom fails to beautify and bless. Each life, in early dawn, wins from the old graybeard's hands hope and love and joy in very showers; youth is so beautiful, youth is so hopeful, youth is so bright! Old Time gives more than he ever takes away, for he gives days replete with life and strength and gemmed with golden hours; but when he asks them back, they are shrunken and worthless, mere empty shells, from which man has extracted the sweetness and the goodness to his own vitality or destruction. Old Time is merciful; if he wounds with that keen scythe of his, he as often cures with healing balm. More often he spares from cruel hurts the aged and the young. The young spring joyously over his scythe, and he pelts them with flowers, and loves them for their daring and content; they fear him not. Strong manhood rushes at him, wrestles with him, strives to wrest from him more than he will ever give; so perchance he throws that strong man, or pitilessly severs a limb. But the aged he loves, because they are like to him; their bleeding wounds he numbs, their failing hands he takes within his own, and leads them gently on the way; then filling their poor hearts with blessed memories of youth and spring, draws his scythe around them, and lays them gently down to rest.

The Rose of Enderby was favoured by old Time, who called Dame Nature to him, and bade her paint her darling with colours rich and rare; to filch somewhat from the red beauty of the bud; to subdue it to a fainter softer hue; to darken the gold tints in the amber hair; to deepen the lustre in the laughing eyes; to whisper to the heart of the rose, so that the sweet voice of Nature might flutter that maiden heart, and raise the maiden blush, that fairest gem in maiden's dower.

Deborah Fleming was a very proud maiden. She heard those whispers; she felt those fairy knockings at her heart, but she barred the door against them. She had grown so beautiful in her flush of dawn and grace of womanhood, that if all eyes had not told her she was beautiful, she must still have known it; and a proud happy consciousness took possession of her and made her fairer. Yet these were dark days for Enderby. You might

not have thought it, to hear Deborah's songs and laughter, and to see the father and daughter together; but how often it is so—ruin is laid away like an ugly dream, not to be realised, not to be believed in, till the inevitable end. Then there was hope, hope that never dies out but with life, and Deborah threw hope round her two darlings; but she *did* suffer for them as much as her wild buoyant spirit and hopeful heart would let her. She did pray for them sometimes, not often. Deborah had well-nigh forgotten her mother's prayers, and learned no new ones. Heaven help her! But in those days Deborah's noble heart kept her true to God and man, so that she did not stray far away in her wild and wilful youth. She did strive to lead her darlings right, the old man and the young. She was their one link to good. Her woman's eloquence and woman's love had sometimes saved them. She knew their danger; she saw the dark cloud that gathered and ever deepened over Enderby. With her feeble hands she strove to avert it, and yet looked and laughed with undaunted brow, feeling the joy and gladness in her heart, that outshone all else, and broke out in uncontrollable sunshine over all. 'Oh, Charlie was young; he must sow his "wild oats" like other men.'—'Oh, that rich old uncle who had gone to America, and made fabulous wealth, and been no more heard of, would come home and die, and leave father all his fortune, to build up the fortunes of Enderby.'—'There were joyful days to come!'

Meantime Kingston Fleming was travelling abroad as a tutor, having carried off high honours from Granta. Deborah had not seen him for more than two years. Betrothed, folks said, to Beatrice Blancheflower, and they would marry soon. Charlie had left Granta, nor was he very often seen at Enderby. May's grandmother was dead, and May was an heiress, living in Italy with a stern old guardian, and sometimes dreaming of going again to Enderby, and sometimes writing a long, long letter to Deborah. 'Mistress Dinnage' lived at home, and kept her father's house, and dismissed all rustic lovers. Deborah now used the grand saloon at Enderby, long uninhabited. You approached it by the picture-gallery, which was lighted on one side at regular intervals by high windows; while on the opposite wall hung faded portraits of Flemings innumerable, knight and lady. The guests (what guests there were) were ushered along this gallery by grim old Marjory, and so into the presence of the beautiful Deborah Fleming; or if Deborah were not there, her spirit would seem to pervade the place. The roses blooming about in careless gay luxuriance; the curtains thrown back; the sun streaming in brightness through the great semicircular window, lighting up even the gloomy walls, and bringing out in curious distinctness the grotesque figures woven in the ancient tapestry; the work and flowers scattered about; the little white fluffs of kitlings disporting on the rug; the flowery perfumed

atmosphere—all breathed of Deborah Fleming and summer-time.

We don't know if the stately old guest whom Dame Marjory ushered in that morning was insensible to the charm or no. He walked to the window and sniffed at scent of the roses, looking, as he did so, blind and grim. He was an old man, but still a straight and stately one; his features were strongly marked, and intersected by deep lines of passion and craft; but he looked a thorough-bred old gentleman, so clean, so calm, so placid—and all evil passions seemed to be at rest. There was something even pathetic in the dim gray eyes and expression of gloomy weariness. He had not the appearance of a formidable foe, or of being full of cruel passions either, as he stood in the morning sun. It might be that the dark tales and rumours of old Adam Sinclair were all false; it might be envy, it might be jealousy, that made men talk thus of the wifeless and childless master of Lincoln Castle, who was the owner of lands so broad and brave. At all events he proved a friend in need to Sir Vincent Fleming, and therefore Sir Vincent gave no credit to those tales.

Now Adam Sinclair had thrice seen Deborah Fleming—once as a laughing mischievous child, grimacing at him unheeded from behind her father's chair. Again, riding with a gay cavalcade in the streets of Granta, when a young fop whispered Deborah, and she laughed (was it at him?); and he did not forget the girl on the black horse. Again he met her in the hall late one night at Enderby—he met her face to face, and Sir Vincent introduced him, under circumstances which we shall here relate.

Sir Vincent and his boon companions had been drinking deeply that night. From a far-away chamber Deborah heard the sounds of song and laughter and loud voices. She knew too that there was something more than drinking going on, that fortunes perhaps were being lost and won. She sat on and listened, looking stern and grave for her, and the great clock struck the hours two, three, four! Deborah had got it into her head that those men were all pitted against her father, and were laughing at his ruin. She walked restlessly to and fro; her cheeks began to fire and her wild eyes to flash. Suddenly her father, looking pale and unsteady, and leaning on the arm of a tall angular old man, entered the hall. Both started as if they saw a ghost; Sir Vincent grasped Adam Sinclair's arm, and so Deborah Fleming faced them in all her beauty.

'Child,' muttered Sir Vincent huskily, 'my old friend. Shake Master Sinclair by the hand. He's your father's good friend.'

Adam Sinclair smiled suavely, and bowed well-nigh to his knees; he was quite sober, and now beheld the superb figure he had seen on horseback at Granta, and a face of exquisite loveliness and disdain. But when he extended his long lean palm, Deborah put her right hand behind her back, laid the other on her father's arm, and knitted her dark brows at Sinclair with the glance of a tigress. So passed that formal introduction.

Merriment, disdain, angry passion—he remembered all, and still Deborah Fleming stood before him as she had stood on the night of his repulse. He *must* see her again and talk with

her. Twice he called in vain at Enderby, and still those falcon eyes pursued him. Day and night, he pictured some man, young and handsome, kneeling at Deborah Fleming's feet, and then he shook with the maddening thought. Then he bethought him of his own broad lands and his grand old castle, and he had hopes of he knew not what. But trembling, he rode again to Enderby. Sir Vincent was not at home; 'Mistress Fleming' was. Thus he stood, waiting for Mistress Fleming's step: he was not deaf, when it came; he counted each light reluctant footfall, and his heart beat violently, like a boy's. So the courtier and the country maiden met for the first time, alone. Master Sinclair apologised again, as he had done by Marjory, for the intrusion, but begged the favour of a few moments' interview with Mistress Fleming. Mistress Fleming bowed in proud silence, and a faint colour tinged her cheeks, at the thought of her former reception of this grave old man; she thought in her heart she had been rude and unmaidenly, perhaps unjust to him; still an unconquerable dislike and shrinking made her sit as far away from him as might be. He staid a long half hour, and he paid her delicate and courtly compliments; he shewed by his looks and conversation that he thought her not only a beautiful girl but a thoughtful intellectual woman. Deborah was half charmed against her own heart; and he found her so sweet and gentle, that the next day he rode over again, trembling with eagerness, wild hopes, and sore anxiety, and had asked to see Sir Vincent Fleming. Deborah was out. She returned from a ride in one of her mad fits of joy and animal spirits, and with loosened hair and flying step, entered the hall where Sir Vincent was alone. It was a fair spring evening; the old baronet was smoking his pipe, and striding thoughtfully to and fro, but somehow Deborah stopped on her way to his arms; she knew by his face that something unusual had happened.

'Come hither, Rose of Enderby,' said Sir Vincent, and threw down his pipe, and gathered his little daughter in his arms. 'Let me congratulate thee on thy first conquest.'

'What do you mean, father?' asked Deborah, blushing as red as any rose.

'Why, a fellow has been here this morning asking ye of me—asking ye in marriage—no less than Master Adam Sinclair, of Lincoln Castle!'

What a flood of colour rushed into Deborah's face, dyeing her very brow! She was startled, she was shamed, she was half proud, she was disdainful. 'Does that old man want to wed me, father?'

'Ay; that old man, the greatest man in the county.'

'In riches, father.'

'And in land: he has a goodly home. He has done your father good service, Deb. And he is charmed with Mistress Fleming.'

'Well, let him be charmed. I find no charms in him. Nay; shake not your head, good father. Not only do I find nought to charm me, but my heart rebels against the smooth-tongued old man who calls himself my father's friend. Father, I love him not. Not for twenty castles, would I be Master Sinclair's wife!'

'Wrong, wrong, Deb; too rash by half. Think it over, child; ask yourself if ye are not hot-headed, blind, and prejudiced; and if it were not better to wait and know Master Sinclair better, before

casting from ye the prize that has been for many years the vain desire of every maid and matron round. Wait, Deb, and let me have your sober answer to-morrow, or later still.'

Deborah grew very pale. 'Father,' she said, 'd'ye really, truly love and respect this Adam Sinclair in your heart? Is he so dear to you—and can ye trust him *so well*, that after a few hours' thought ye are ready and willing to give up your one daughter to him for *life*? For life, father—for *life*—and no love to bear me up.'

'He is an old man, Deb.'

'Yes; and he will die soon, you would say, and leave Lincoln Castle to me! But first, I would sell my soul, father, and drag on through days of unutterable horror, as Adam Sinclair's wife, before I could be released. And God might judge me, by taking me the first. O father, father! Say thou lovest me. Do not break my heart. Say thou hast some great and secret reason for liking this old man. Say thou'rt in a grievous strait, to need this help of me. Or only say, sweet father, that it wrings thine heart to ask me to part from thee. Anything, but that thou'rt willing to be rid of Deb! Ah me! Thou art cool, father—thou art indifferent, while my soul aches for sorrow at the very thought of parting from thee! Ah, but thou wilt have thy darling still—thy Charlie; while Deb, poor Deb would languish as Mistress Sinclair, with no more hope in life. I should have nought but memory, and memory would be like to drive me mad!'

Sir Vincent was fairly taken by storm, by Deborah's burst of fiery feeling; he grew pale as herself, he folded her to his breast; for indeed under his exterior coolness, he had been sore pressed, and feeling deeply; his heart had been loudly crying out on him, for this temptation to give away his young and only daughter to a man more than double her years, and such a man as Adam Sinclair. 'Deb, Deb,' he faltered, 'thou hast vanquished me! *Love* thee, child—love thee, little sweet blossom! Thy mother's living image, my hope, my *stay*! Nay; keep in my heart, and shelter here! It is all I have to offer thee. Don't unman me, love, by these tears. 'Twas sore temptation tempted me to give thee up—to have thee the greatest lady in the county, instead of nought but the daughter of a beggared and a ruined man.'

Deborah dashed aside her tears; all her heart spoke in her brave bright upward smile upon his breast: 'Nay, father, nay—not beggared, not ruined. These are strong words. And thy love is greater treasure to me than all the wealth of Master Sinclair. Put thine arms round me. There; I am as happy and hopeful as a queen; so thou wilt be happy too. And who knows but Deborah Fleming may do great things yet? Why, if Master Sinclair finds something in this poor Deborah Fleming to love, a greater and grander may. I am not so modest but that I know my worth either.'

'Ah, thou'lt make many a heart ache, Deb, before thy day is done. Meantime, be kind and friendly to Adam Sinclair, for my sake, if he will be friends. I tell ye he will not give up hope. I know Adam. Repulse him not, Deb; let him hope on; it will sun Adam's declining days.'

'I will give him no false hopes, father. Tell him from me that I can never be his wife; thus he may be looking elsewhere. Then if it pleases him

to come to Enderby for my friendship's sake, he can. But father, does he not *darken* Enderby?"

Sir Vincent frowned. "How mean ye, child?"

"Why, father, he professes too great love for you; I doubt a little these mighty professions. My love makes my eyes like lynx's eyes, to see through all who work *thee* harm."

"Then they have proved too keen. Adam Sinclair would cut off his right hand for me. I say not for love; he comes not of a loving kind, and men o' the world deal not in such stuff one towards another; but because in former years I saved him from a worse trouble than ever I have known. There; it is *gratitude* that binds this man to me, and he has shewn it."

"Ah! Then I will thrust away this distrust that is not worthy of me. I never knew the heart that was not grateful for great service done. And what is more, I'll ne'er believe in ingratitude. Dear Adam Sinclair! Good old man! Grateful, grim, old, true friend of my father, I will strive to forget that you have ever wished to wed me; so I may grow to like you as a friend."

Sir Vincent laughed. "And this is hard? What dost like? Whom dost like, Deb? Of all the brave fellows thou seest in the hunting-field, whom couldst thou choose?"

"Faith, father, I can see no "brave fellow" there but the poor gallant one streaming along in the bushy-tailed red-brown coat!"

"Sir Reynard? Ha, ha! Thou'rt thy father's true daughter. But not one beside Master Fox?"

"Not one."

"I am glad on't. They are all rattle-pates or penniless. I wish to give thee to better folk."

"Hark to him! Thou ambitious old dear! Well-a-day, I am in no haste to wed. As Deborah Fleming, I am happy. Oh, that I might never change that name!"

"Pshaw! Thou'lt not say this always; but unless with thy full and free consent, Deborah Fleming thou shalt remain."

"This is the gipsy prophecy," said Deborah, as she went up the great oak stairs. "The grand old man who would meet me at the gates of my own home." Then in her own room, musing: "But "love and greatness should come hand in hand." God forbid that I ever love ye, Adam Sinclair! Unless some false witch should blind my eyes with "love in idleness," I never will. Oh, keep me from it, kind Providence! If ever so deluded and deceived, I would wake up to misery! If I saw father *starving*, would I? No; for in so doing, I would kill both my body and *soul*. I wonder, will King Fleming ever return? I had well nigh forgot him. And he will be for wedding Mistress Blancheflower. Why she must be getting old. Ah, well-a-day, we all grow old."

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

It was about this time that a distant kinswoman of Deborah's died, leaving her a legacy of twenty guineas a year. It seemed a fortune to Mistress Fleming. With the twenty golden pieces in her hand, she sat revolving in her mind what she would buy with them, happy as the blue fly that buzzed about her sunny room, she who had so often looked on grim poverty face to face. Our heroine was full of joy. The bells of Enderby were ringing out their glad gay peals. The air

was radiant with sunshine, and heavy with fragrance. Kingston Fleming was coming home, and coming to Enderby. The murmur of the bees about the ivy, the scent of clambering roses and honeysuckle, brought back the days of childhood. There, were the great boughs in the wych-elm where they swung; there, were the green woods where they played.

Deborah, with her arm leaning on the warm sill, was in a very dream of bliss, and then her wandering thoughts came back. Yes, half must be laid by in case of need, or as much as could possibly be spared; she would say half. Then there must be a new cap for Marjory, a book for Mistress Dinnage—a tale of love and romance; a hunting-knife for Jordan. And what for dear old Charlie? She must think that over. It was difficult to know what could be nice enough for one so fastidious and so dear. And what for herself? A new cap to match the lace she had; for she was no longer a hoyden with tangled locks, but "Miss Fleming." She would ride into Granta the next day, and buy that little cap. Drawing the curtain which shut out the alcove, the maiden threw her money on the bed, and there too was laid a soft and sheeny dress, trimmed with costly cobweb lace, a dress of her grandmother's modernised artfully by herself and Mistress Dinnage. Deborah's heart beat and her colour rose. Girls are silly beings. She could think of and pine for nought but that coquetish cap which would jauntily set her love-locks.

While thus musing, the door opened abruptly, and in stalked a travel-stained figure, a tall figure, with wild dishevelled hair. It was Charlie Fleming, with the passions of his boyhood darkened and deepened, in the sombre beauty of the face that had grown stern and set. He was pale through his bronze; his long hair streamed back from his heated brow, and his whole air betokened a reckless fugitive spirit. Deborah had not seen him for weeks; she gave a cry of joy, and sprang into his arms. The roughness of the boy had passed from Charlie Fleming, but his rare demonstrations of affection were shewn to Deborah only. "I am only here for half an hour, Deb. I must saddle horse afresh and off to Lincoln Castle. I am in rare trouble, Deb. Hush, child! I am come to thank ye for refusing Adam Sinclair. Better poverty, Deb, than that. Better starvation. I'd blow his brains out sooner than see you his wife. See that ye are never talked into this. I know your generous madness, child; let no *misery* move ye to it."

"Nay, Charlie; it never shall! But if you are so averse to him, do not go to Lincoln. I hate him. I distrust him more and more. You are pale and tired too, Charlie. Is it the *old* trouble?" Deborah leaned forward, where she sat opposite him; the sweet confidante of father and brother was wont to forget all her own joys and sorrows in theirs.

Charlie raised his dark beautiful eyes to hers, then dropped them; the furtive glance was enough. Deborah thought of her gold, and her heart began to throb with tumultuous joy. "Is it *much*, Charlie? More than—twenty guineas?"

Charlie laughed a bitter laugh. "Don't ask me, child," he said; "you cannot help me, Deb. I am undone!"

"Not so undone but that I can help you a little," whispered Deborah softly, and ran towards the

bed. Then she drew Charlie's hands down from his moody face, and with her own all radiant, laid her treasure in his hands. 'See, Charlie! This is *mine*, my very own. I have never had such riches before. Just before you came in, dear boy, I was racking my brains as to what I could buy you with these guineas, and now I give them all to you in place of presents. Don't thank me; it is thanks enough to let me stand thy friend. For what need have I for money? To me it would be worthless!'

'Who gave ye this, Deb?'

'A fairy—a true fairy, who knew your need.'

'Not May Warriston?'

'May Warriston? No! What ails you?'

'Deb, I cannot rob thee, dear. Thou needst a thousand little gewgaws such as women love. Say no more o' this;' and Charlie gave her back the gold.

But Deborah was on her knees, putting her soft face up to his. 'Charlie, it will break my heart if you disdain my poor gift. I tell you again, I have no need for money—only as a temptation for finery and trinkets which it would be sin for me to wear. Old Charlie, sweet old Charlie, I *will* be mistress here!' And Deborah poured her gold into his pocket and closed it up. 'You will not go to Lincoln *now*?'

Charlie Fleming took her face between his hands; a melancholy smile fluttered about his lips; and she, so radiantly happy: '*Will* you go?' she urged. 'Yes.'

'Oh, wilful, headstrong, obstinate! To this one time I give consent; but after this, you shall go no more to Lincoln, to be the companion of that bad old treacherous man. He would fain ruin us all; I know it!'

'Tush, tush! Deb. I know just how to take Adam Sinclair. And if he wrongs mine by word or deed, let him look to it!' And the young giant rose to his feet.

Deborah caught his arm. 'You are not going to fight him?'

'Fight him? No; we are friends, bosom friends, like as thyself to Mistress Dinnage.'

'Well, be not rash and hot-headed. I know your fiery temper, and am ever in fear and trembling, with such a man as Master Sinclair too, that you should quarrel and hurt him sorely. Quarrel not about *me*, Charlie; he is always courteous to me.'

'I hope so. Good-bye, sweet Deb, good-bye.' The brother and sister kissed, and Charlie sped to the court-yard.

Old Jordan held Bayard for him, ready saddled. 'Thanks, good Jordan. Where is my father?'

'I ain't seen him these three days, Master Charlie. An' now thou'rt goin' away agen, these be dull days for Enderby an' Mistress Deborah.'

'Where's Mistress Dinnage?' asked Charlie, dropping his keen glance to the old man's face.

'In the manor here; she well-nigh lives with Mistress Deborah, an' well she may.'

'I never see her about.'

'She's there though, Master Charlie.'

'Good-bye, Jordan. Take care of them.' And Charlie Fleming, striking spurs to his horse, rode away; not so fast but that one pair of dark eyes, full of proud reluctant tears and lingering passion, looked from a window overhead, and watched him as he sped away.

'Poor little Deb!' muttered Charlie, as his good horse bore him far away. 'I will not forget thee, dear. Poor little maid! It has eased her heart. A drop, a drop in the ocean of my troubles, is Deb's gold to me. Poor child! Now, if you fail, Adam Sinclair, flight is my only chance.'

HOTEL HOSPITALS.

SOME years ago, a Birmingham medical man—Mr West—in a very ably written contrast between English and French surgery, drew attention to a kind of hospital common abroad, and much appreciated there by the class for whose benefit these institutions are intended, but of which in Britain we have no examples, or at most one or two experimental wards on a very limited scale. These institutions are hospitals where patients of the middle class who can afford and are willing to pay a moderate sum, can be received when serious illness or accident unfortunately necessitates medical aid—a 'special kind of hospital,' said Mr West, 'unknown in England, which I think of great utility, and of which there is, I believe, an urgent need, not only in London, but also in every large town throughout the provinces.'

Mr West's paper does not appear to have borne much fruit at the time; but recently the question has appeared again, and this time, so much has been done to give prominence to the movement, that a public meeting was held last June at the Mansion House, to discuss points in connection with this great subject. There cannot be two opinions as to the general advisability of establishing such hospitals in this country, and as was to be expected from the honourable desire of the medical faculty always to do what appears best for suffering humanity, we find that the scheme has the cordial approval of the presidents of the great medical bodies and the chief members of the profession in London, who agree that this is a much-needed institution.

Out of England, there are various examples of such hospitals, such as the State Hospital at Christiania, which is entirely supported by such paying patients; the famous *Maison Municipale de Santé* in Paris; and various institutions in Germany and the United States, where for a moderate fixed payment, men or women of limited means, or who have no home in a large city, can obtain adequate care and proper nursing in case of illness. The great French hospital, the *Maison Municipale de Santé*, is a model of what such an establishment should be. It is under the control of the municipal authorities, and has nearly six hundred beds ready for the treatment of sick and wounded persons of the class now alluded to, who, for a daily payment varying from four to twelve francs, can obtain medical and surgical advice—medicine, food, baths, and all else necessary for their proper alleviation or cure. There are two physicians and a surgeon on the staff of the hospital; but if the patients choose, they can call in consultation any of the Parisian hospital doctors, and the fees paid to them are the only extra expense that inmates are liable for. 'The hospital,' says Mr West, 'is clean, well-furnished, comfortable, and contains every variety of bath that the patients can possibly require.'

What a boon such an establishment would be, not only for the large numbers of clerks and

assistants in our shops and warehouses, who live in lodgings, and are far from the tender hands of a loving nurse, but also for a class who are anxious to have the advantages of a well-managed hospital and its careful nursing, rather than subject near and dear ones at home to all the trouble and anxiety of nursing and watching, besides the great risk of infection. There is certainly a strong and no doubt very natural feeling against the idea of being away from home when sickness overtakes us; but in process of time this dislike must yield to the undoubted fact, that in a well-organised hospital, a case has, as a rule, a far better chance than elsewhere of being thoroughly attended to according to the directions of the physician. The loving hands that smooth the pillow under the uneasy head need not be absent here; but it must be remembered that it is not given to every mother or wife to be a good nurse. Nervousness and inexperience, over-anxiety from the very great interest in the issues of life and death for the loved one, are often causes of risk to the patient. Then, too, house accommodation may be limited: perfect isolation of the infected patient, especially in the 'flats' of such a town as Edinburgh, may be well-nigh impossible; while the disease may be, like small-pox, of a kind that drives all but the most self-sacrificing of friends away.

In one of the many letters written on this subject we get a pitiable instance of such a case as this: A young man, living with a lady and her daughters, became ill with small-pox. His mother was dead, his father in India. When it was clear what disease he had, every one left him but one servant. His doctor sent him to a small-pox hospital, but it was full; and he had to be brought back again, and put under the care of a nurse from an Institution; but at ten P.M. this Mrs Gamp was found to be quite drunk, and another had to be sent for. But how infinitely better would it have been if he could have been sent to a paying hospital. The present writer knew of a case some years ago that peculiarly illustrates the value of such institutions. A young married man of limited but not straitened means was seized with illness at home about a week before the 'flitting term,' at which time he was to remove his household goods to another town. The doctor pronounced it fever, and said that if he was to be removed at all, it must be immediately. It was absolutely necessary he should leave his house when his tenancy expired; and as they had no friends in town to whom to go, no course was open but to send the sick man to the public hospital; which was done. Here was a distinct perversion of the objects of such an institution; and though in this case some compensation was made in the form of a donation, yet here again, how much better for all parties if that hospital had had a wing, where he could have been taken in on the distinct footing of payment for its advantages.

Various proposals have been made as to the mode of instituting such hospitals. Sir Rutherford Alcock is in favour of a certain number of wards in good existing hospitals being set aside for the accommodation of paying patients at varying rates, to suit their varying means; others advocate the building of distinct wings or pavilions to existing hospitals; while many think that buildings separate in every way should be specially built. The

advantages in favour of connection are that in these hospitals there is already an organised staff of physicians, surgeons, and nurses; and that while the extra expense of an expansion of this staff would be comparatively small, the payments from the new class of patients would largely help the funds of the hospital in its charitable purposes. It is probable, however, that a distinct institution—an 'Hotel Hospital' it is proposed to call it—will soon be set on foot, as a limited liability company is spoken of for the purpose.

The London *Figaro* some time ago advocated the establishment of dispensaries where a man of the middle class could get for a small fee first-rate medical advice. In this material respect the workman is decidedly better off than the struggling member of the middle class, who, if he has to consult a leading physician, must pay fees beyond what he too often can afford, while to the poor man the highest medical advice in the kingdom is as free as the air he breathes. The *Figaro* shows how this would be not only a great advantage to middle class people but to the medical profession, in which at present many young men have to be content with a local practice, because they have no opportunity for obtaining hospital practice, which is so necessary for qualification as a general physician.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

A GRANDFATHER'S STORY.

ABOUT sixty years ago I was in Paris for the first time in my life. Bonaparte still lingered at St Helena; and the adventurers, good, bad, and indifferent in character, who had served in his armies had not yet lost all hope of the return of their idol, and consequently had not yet thought it worth while to settle down into thorough peace and quietness.

Young Paul Ferrand, whom I frequently met at the café, and who had served as a captain at Waterloo, was sure that the Little Corporal would come back again soon. 'You have not yet beaten him,' he would tell me laughing. 'You sent him to Elba, but he returned; you have sent him to St Helena, and he will return again. We shall see.'

Ferrand was an exceedingly nice fellow; and although he professed to cherish an unquenchable hatred for England and everything English, he had, by some means or other, become attached to Alice Rae, a young English lady of my acquaintance, and who had been living with her mother since the conclusion of peace at Paris, not far from the abode of the ex-captain. And he was always very friendly with me too. He would, it is true, abuse my countrymen most unmercifully; but he was always particularly good-natured; and whenever he found himself saying a little too much, he would arrest himself and apologise so heartily, that I never could be angry with him. I was alone in the French capital, and had few friends there except Mrs Rae, her daughter Alice, and Paul; and so it happened that I passed a good deal of my time in the society of these three. The mother, a woman still in the prime of life, and the widow of a king's messenger, was a connection of mine by marriage, and that fact gave me a good excuse for offering my services as escort whenever she and her pretty daughter thought fit

to go to the theatre or the opera. At such times Paul always had a seat in the stalls; and between the acts he would come up to my box, to the delight of Alice, who was in love with him, and to the no small satisfaction of Mrs Rae, who herself had quite a maternal affection for the young Frenchman, and did not in the least discourage his attentions to her daughter. If there were no formal engagement between the two, it was at least perfectly understood by all parties that as soon as Paul should get an appointment, for which at the time he was a candidate, he was to marry Alice; and I, though only a few years her senior, was to give her away.

One night the opera-house was crowded more than usual. A great singer was to appear, and a new work by a renowned composer was to be performed. But Paul Ferrand, sitting in the stalls, seemed scarcely to listen to the music or to notice the acting; and much more often were his eyes turned in the direction of my box than in that of the stage. Alice and her mother were with me; and as the curtain fell at the conclusion of the first act, Paul came up to us. He was in high spirits, for he had heard that the minister had decided to give him the coveted post, and he expected to hear in a few days that his appointment had been signed by the king. We congratulated him; and as he left us to return to his seat, I whispered to him: 'You'll be a happy man in a month or two now, Paul.' He smiled, and shut the door.

We watched him as he threaded his way to his place. It was in the centre of the second row from the orchestra, and he had left his opera-glasses on the chair, in order to preserve his right to it; but during his absence a tall, military-looking man had appropriated it, and had coolly put the glasses on one side. Paul approached the stranger with the utmost politeness, and I suppose, for naturally I could not hear, requested him to move. The interloper did not deign to answer, but sneeringly looked up at Ferrand, as though to ask him what he meant by his intrusion. Paul pointed to the opera-glasses; but the stranger neither replied nor moved, but continued to appear as though he did not hear. I saw that matters were assuming a dangerous complexion, for in the new-comer I recognised Victor Laroquière, an ex-Bonapartist officer like Paul, a notorious bully, and one of the most celebrated duellists in France. But what could I do? I could only sit still, much against my will, and witness the inevitable consequences. I thought Alice would faint when Laroquière in the calmest way rose before the crowded assemblage and struck Paul in the face with his glove; but she recovered herself, and like a statue watched her lover pick up his opera-glasses, bow to his insulter, and without a word, leave the building. There were some exclamations from the audience; but the duellist again rose, and with a theatrical air gazed round, mockingly imitated Paul's parting bow, and resumed his seat. This was too much for poor Alice. She could not remain any longer; she must go home; and so, with some difficulty, I got her and her mother to my carriage, told the coachman to drive them home, and myself walked quickly to Paul's lodgings.

He had arrived before me, and was already writing when I entered his room. 'Of course,' he said, as he saw me and came towards me with

both hands outstretched, 'you, my dear friend, will assist me. It is impossible to do anything but fight. Even Alice could not make me alter my conviction upon that point, the insult was so public.'

'Suppose you leave the country?' I suggested.

'Then I should have to give up the appointment and Alice too. No, my dear fellow, I am a Frenchman, and I must fight; and you must arrange matters for me. If he shoots me, it cannot be helped; if I shoot him, I shall have shot the biggest scoundrel in Paris. I beg you to call upon Laroquière to-night. I have already discovered his address. Here it is.'

'But must you really fight? It is suicide to fight with a professional duellist.'

'Ah,' he said, shaking his head, 'I am afraid it is suicide; but I *must* fight; so please don't try and persuade me that I need not. And I will fight, too, as soon as possible. You can arrange everything for to-morrow morning. I must have the matter over. In a day or two I might be a coward.'

By his looks he implored me to go to Laroquière; and constituted as French society was at that time, I had no other course open to me than to do as he wished.

'If Monsieur come from M. Paul Ferrand,' said a man-servant when I inquired whether I could see his master, 'M. Laroquière has sent to say that he has not yet left the opera. He has, however, sent this pencilled note, which I am to give to the gentleman who comes from M. Ferrand.'

I tore open the missive. It contained two cards, one bearing the name of the duellist, and the second that of M. Fernand Delaraie, Rue Vivienne 18. Certainly it was an off-hand way of acquainting me with the name and whereabouts of Laroquière's second; but as I wished to pick no quarrel, I walked on to the Rue Vivienne, and in a few minutes was ushered into the presence of M. Delaraie himself. This worthy was a young man, aged about three-and twenty, and dressed in the very extreme of fashion. His ruffles were immaculate, and most symmetrically arranged; his lace handkerchief was steeped in essences; his gloves, which lay on the table—for he had only just returned, at Laroquière's request, from the opera—were small and delicate; his fingers were covered with valuable rings; and the bunch of gold seals depending from his fob was unusually heavy and brilliant. He did not strike me as appearing particularly warlike; but nevertheless, after formally saluting me, he at once touched upon the object of my visit; and before I had been ten minutes in his company, had arranged to meet Ferrand and myself at a certain spot, dear to duellists of the time, at an early hour next morning, and to bring Laroquière with him.

'I don't think we shall need a surgeon,' he said to me quite affably at parting; 'but if you please, you can bring one. In his last affair my principal shot his man through the temples, and he died immediately. I sincerely hope, Monsieur, that your friend is as clever.'

'Confound the fellow!' I said to myself as I left the house and sought the residence of my own medical man. 'I am afraid poor Ferrand is not such a consummate murderer as Laroquière.'

After seeing the surgeon, to whom I briefly explained matters, I called upon Mrs Rae. She

was doing her best to comfort her daughter, who was in the greatest possible distress. 'Are they going to fight?' she asked me.

'My dear Alice,' I said, 'they are. I have done my best to dissuade Paul; but he says, and I am obliged to agree, that he must fight. Let us hope for the best. He has a sure eye and a steady hand, and he has right on his side. The other man is a scoundrel. And you must remember that poor Paul is not an Englishman. If I were he, I would not fight; but as it is, the matter cannot be over-looked, and indeed everything is arranged.'

'You are to be with him?' said Mrs Rae, looking as white as a sheet.

'Yes; they are to meet to-morrow morning, and by breakfast-time Alice's suspense will be over. She must bear up.'

'You must prevent the duel,' sobbed the half-heart-broken girl. 'Cannot Paul let the insult pass? But no; it was so public.'

'You can only hope,' I said. 'I will see you in the morning; but now I must go back to him, and see that he gets some sleep.'

'Tell him,' cried Alice, 'that if he is killed I shall die. Come here directly it is over. Come, even if he falls: you must tell me about it. I must hear everything.' She buried her face in her hands; and I, escaping from the unhappy girl, hurried to Paul.

He was still writing, and his hair was in disorder, and his face pale when he turned towards me. 'I am no coward,' he said, 'but I am saying good-bye to her, for I shall die to-morrow.'

'My dear fellow,' I exclaimed, 'you will shoot Laroquière, and be married next month. You must finish your writing at once and go to bed. I will sleep here to-night, for I must see that you turn out in time to-morrow morning; so be as quick as possible.'

He wrote for another half-hour, addressed the document to Alice Rae, placed a lock of his hair within it, and after sealing it up, gave it to me.

'Give that to her,' he said, 'if Laroquière kills me outright—and I know he will. If it were not for Alice, I declare that I should be quite glad to meet him. Now for bed.'

He undressed; whilst I lay down on the sofa in the next room and lit a cigar, for I could not afford to sleep myself. Soon all was quiet, and I stole in to see Paul lying as quiet as a child with a smile on his face. Probably, nay assuredly, I passed a more uncomfortable night than he did. Only with the greatest possible difficulty could I keep awake; and the hours seemed to linger for ever. At last, however, daylight dawned, and I called Ferrand, who woke refreshed and in comparatively good spirits. After a hurried breakfast we muffled ourselves up; I placed a flask of brandy, some powder and bullets, and a brace of pistols in my pockets, and we sallied forth in the cold morning air. Scarcely any one was abroad, except a few sleepy watchmen, who seemed to make very shrewd guesses at the object of our expedition; and through the silent streets we went for a mile or so, until we reached the meeting-place.

Laroquière and Delaraie were there before us, and my friend the surgeon arrived immediately afterwards in his carriage, which waited near at hand. The pistols were produced and loaded. Laroquière chose one, and I gave the other to Paul; and then the two men took up positions at

a distance of twenty paces from each other, and waited for Delaraie to give the signal to fire.

'Stay!' cried the bully, as his second stepped back; 'let the young hound listen to this. I am not trifling with him: I shall shoot him only where he wishes, for I am generous, parbleu!'

'If I do not kill you,' said Paul quietly, 'I prefer to die.'

'Then I shoot him through the heart,' coolly observed Laroquière. 'It will teach others not to challenge me.'

There was something to me unspeakably horrible in the way in which these last words were pronounced. I shuddered, and looked at Paul. He smiled at me, and at the same instant Delaraie gave the signal.

There was but one report, for Ferrand's pistol flashed in the pan. The poor fellow turned round towards me with fixed eye and pale face, and with the name of Alice on his lips, fell dead. Laroquière turned on his heel, and departed quickly in company with Delaraie, while I aided the surgeon in his brief examination of Paul's body. Surely enough, the bullet had passed through his heart. He must have died almost instantaneously, for he did not move after he fell, and the last smile with which he had looked at me was still upon his face. It was a melancholy business in every respect. I had to break the sad news to Alice and her mother; and the two ladies were so terribly overcome, that I feared the shock would have some permanent effect upon their health. For my part, I was obliged to hurry to England as soon as possible; and Laroquière, I heard, also got away, and remained out of France until the affair had blown over.

I kept up a correspondence with Mrs Rae, and was glad after a time to hear from her that Alice, though still terribly upset, had learned to look with a certain amount of philosophy upon her misfortune, and had to some extent recovered her usual health, if not her usual spirits. Meantime I settled down in London, and unable to forget my Parisian habits, usually dined at one of the then much frequented taverns in Fleet Street. The *Cheshire Cheese*, which was then in much the same state as it is now, was my favourite haunt; and there, as months passed by, I gradually picked up a few pleasant acquaintances, chief amongst whom was an extremely well-mannered young gentleman named Barton, a man of independent means, good family, and first-rate education.

One day, after he had been dining with me, the conversation turned upon continental manners and particularly upon duelling. As an illustration of my abhorrence of the system, I told my companion about poor Paul's death, a matter in which Barton appeared much interested. He asked me a good many questions about the parties concerned, and after expressing a remarkably strong opinion to the effect that Laroquière was a blackguard, bid me good-night. I went home to my rooms in the Temple; and next day, on visiting the *Cheshire Cheese*, found no Barton. He had left word with one of the waiters that urgent business had called him away, but that he hoped to see me on his return. Weeks passed, and then months, and still Barton did not come back; and I confess that I had begun to forget him altogether, when one evening he dropped into dinner as though he had not been absent for more than a day or two.

'Where have you been?' I asked, after I had heartily shaken hands with him.

'I have been to Paris,' he said. 'On arriving there I found out a little more than you told me about Laroquière, and when I had thoroughly convinced myself that he was the blackguard you painted him, I arranged for a series of lessons at a pistol-gallery. Every day for a month I went and shot for an hour or two, until I was so perfect as to be able to hit a small coin every time at a distance of twenty paces. After satisfying myself as to my proficiency, I took a box at the opera; it may have been the same box that you used to have. Laroquière was pointed out to me. He sat in the stalls, and between the acts he left his seat in order to speak to a lady in another part of the house. I descended as quickly as possible and took his place. He returned, and asked me in an overbearing tone to move. I refused. He persisted. I struck him. He sent me a challenge, and we met upon the same spot, curiously enough, where he had killed your friend Ferrand. Before the signal was given, I said: "M. Laroquière, listen to me. I am not here to trifle with you: but I am as generous as you were with Paul Ferrand. I will shoot you only where you wish." He turned deadly pale. "We will see," he said, "whether I shall not make you a second Ferrand!" "Then I will shoot you," I returned, "as you shot him—through the heart. It will teach other bullies not to challenge me." Whether he was so upset as to be incapable of aiming or not, I cannot say; but my dear fellow, I shot him as dead as a dog, right through the heart, and avenged your friend, at the same time ridding Paris of its biggest villain. It was a case of diamond cut diamond.'

'Well done, Barton!' I exclaimed.

'Wait,' he said, 'and let me finish the drama. We managed to keep the matter very quiet; and before leaving France, I was able to call on Mrs Rae, who is now at Boulogne, for I had a letter of introduction to her from a Parisian acquaintance. When I saw her first, she knew nothing of the affair, but at last I broke the intelligence to her and to her daughter. I found Alice to be a pretty girl, somewhat spoilt by her long mourning, and not very much inclined to listen to me; but my dear fellow, after three weeks of hard persuasion she gave in, and now she and her mother are coming over next week. I believe you were to give Alice away. When she arrives, you shall have a capital opportunity.'

'And,' I added, shaking my friend's hand warmly, 'I shall be delighted to do so.'

MODERN SUPERSTITIONS.

Most people accept it as a fact that superstition went out with the advent of steam, the telegraph, and the penny-post. A little honest observation, however, will assure us that there still exist a number of pitiable though petty superstitions. Among certain classes there are lucky and unlucky days in their calendar. They will not attempt an important task on Friday. The horse-shoe still hangs behind or over the door in the Highlands, and in some places much less removed from the centres of civilisation. East-coast fishermen will yet occasionally burn or otherwise

destroy a boat from which the lives of any of the crew have been lost, no matter how seaworthy or valuable the boat may be. A hare crossing the path of one of these hardy sons of the sea will cause him to forego an intended journey or voyage. To rustic and fisherman alike a concourse of magpies is an evil omen. As for dreams, the belief that they are the forecasts of events is perhaps the strongest of all the forms of their superstition. We might multiply examples, but have said enough to suggest that the follies of their great-grandfathers have still no slight fascination for the ignorant, in spite of the strides which intelligence has made.

But have superstitious beliefs quite left the more intelligent ranks of society? On the very subject of dreams itself is there not a sneaking credulity which goes far to prove the contrary? True, any one of us is quite able to account in a natural way for the character of his or her dreams. Nevertheless, the lady who chides her children for repeating the interpretation which the housemaid has put upon their sleeping vagaries, and sagely instructs them on the subject of imperfect digestion and its effects upon the brain during sleep, is not ashamed to impart to her husband any morning the particulars of her own shocking dreams, or to piously express the hope that something untoward is not about to happen. Her better-half pooh-poohs the matter doubtless, as becomes his superior dignity, but is visited none the less with a vague sense of uneasiness when he remembers that he himself had a vision of losing a tooth or seeing a house on fire. Having courageously quizzed his wife at the breakfast-table on the folly of her augury, and bade her and the children good-bye for the day, he inwardly deploras the unlucky omen of having to turn back for his forgotten umbrella or pocket-book!

How many curious but innocent little customs too are still current, and with the sanction of the wisest. An old slipper is still cast after a bride: it is considered necessary to christen a new ship with a bottle of wine: a fine day is still royal weather; and so on. These and many others most of us would indeed be sorry to see extinct. They are not only harmless, but in their very departure from strait-laced common-sense, give an agreeable and perhaps even healthful relief to the prosiness of ordinary life. To sacrifice them to the strict letter of reason, would be to sacrifice much of the sentiment of life, to banish imagery from poetry, to take the perfume from the rose, to guide into a Dutch canal the current of human affections, which left free will gush and eddy, prattle and murmur by rock and meadow, carrying music and health throughout its living course.

Would that modern superstitions never took less innocent shapes! Having discarded the ghostology of olden times, many people, and among these some men and women of considerable culture, have set up for themselves a novel system of intercourse with the unknown world. Brownies and fairies, with all the fine romance that surrounds the history of their doings among human folks, are dismissed with contempt. Spiritualism has swept all these ethereal puppets off the boards of ordinary life. To substitute what? We might at least look for an improved exhibition and more interesting

'characters;' but the truth is that nothing could be less satisfactory than the modern attempt at demon-craft. There is something so clumsy and inartistic in the whole get-up of the 'spiritual' drama, that it is less surprising to find it very generally scouted than to see it obtain even a partial notoriety.

Ignorance is the parent of superstition, without a doubt; and the one never exists apart from the other. There is, however, a second wise saw that tells a great deal of the truth about the origin of that world-old bugbear of the human mind, namely, 'The wish is father to the thought.' What we strongly desire to be, we are next door to believing to be. The appetite of man's vanity is unappeasable, and in catering for it his fancy plays tricks with his reason. He longs for intercommunication with the unknown, and indulges the wish by creating fictitious agents for that purpose. Tokens, signs, omens, and auguries are also outgrowths of the various forms of desire and vanity. We believe we shall have luck if we turn the money in our pocket when looking at new moon. Men have waited in all ages for the appearance of some favourable sign before beginning any enterprise of importance. If the sun shines on our wedding-day, how auspicious! Palpably in each case because we desire these things to be! But having set up omens with such an object, we, in the cleft-stick of our own superstition, are bound to believe their absence or converse, the foreshadowers of evil.

In many ways modern credulity frees itself from such mechanical trammels as those we have mentioned, to take a form and complexion from the age, losing meanwhile not one jot of its vigour. To dream three times of a hidden treasure and set about, Whang-the-Miller-like, to lay bare the foundations of one's house, is an exploit not to be thought of by the veriest wisacre of our day; but the desire to obtain wealth easily and rapidly being, if anything, more active and rampant, the belief in some magical means for attaining it is the most natural thing in the world. An Eldorado is required, and lo! an Eldorado is implicitly thought to exist. The projectors of a bogus company for 'utilising the clippings of old moons' or 'extracting starch from granite chips' are the good fairies whom by propitiating with a portion of our substance we hope to enlist in our behalf, and obtain a thousand-fold return. Where such a superstition exists, and it is broadcast, any scheme however absurd, any swindle no matter how transparent, will serve for a bait to catch the unwary and over-eager fish. Nothing is so purblind as undue acquisitiveness. The ancient Highlander with his keen eye to the main chance and happy facility for 'attaching' whatever came in his way, found a beautiful horse in rich trappings, browsing ownerless in his path, and following the instinct of his desire rather than the prudence which tradition should have taught him, rashly mounted. In an instant he was borne aloft, then plunged for ever beneath the dark waters of a tarn on the back of the wily and terrible water-kelpie. We too have our illusory steeds in this so vaunted age, and neither the teachings of history nor the bitterest experience seems able to prevent the speculator from vaulting into the saddle, and forthwith launching into perdition.

Charms are things of the past, or believed in

merely by the vulgar; that is to say, those pretty and fanciful conceits which led our ancestors to attach a healing or sanitary virtue to certain objects and ceremonies are now almost extinct. A spray from the rowan-tree is no longer a safeguard against an epidemic, nor the hand of majesty a cure for scrofula. Ladies do not now believe that the presence of a piece of cold iron on their couch, '*while uneasy in their circumstances*,' will secure a happy consummation; nor is a child's caul in much request in these days as a protection against fire and drowning. True, we have got over these beliefs pretty thoroughly. But is the desire for infallible remedies and potent protectives done away with also? Not in the least; and though science is doing its best to provide honest substitutes in a natural measure, the public is not satisfied with its efforts. Quacks are the modern magicians, and quack medicines the charms of latter days. Those who are bald, for instance, will not accept their fate while a single well-puffed elixir with a Greek name remains untried. There is something saddening if not sickening in the evident success which attends the pretences to cure chronic and irremediable diseases, to effect miracles in short with the most trumpery of means and execrably silly devices. Our forefathers were imposed upon no doubt, but there was method in their madness. The 'simples' with which spae-wives and charlatans professed to cure ailments were in many cases effective and now recognised drugs, and were at the worst perfectly harmless; while the rites with which they were administered, if quite apart from the purpose, yet appealed gracefully to the imagination. Nowadays, however, the 'simples' are the patients and not the medicines! The old story. Child-like, the age cries for something that it cannot get, rejecting the good that is within reach.

In a recent number of this *Journal* we had occasion to refer to the amazing credulity of Americans on the subject of professional 'mediums.' The worst of it is that the extent to which this has been laid bare is insignificant compared with that which really remains unexposed. The desire to work with supernatural tools in effecting the paltriest and meanest of human ends would seem to have divided a people of accredited shrewdness into the two classes of rogues and dupes. But as we have seen, we too have been singed at the same fire. There are, moreover, other, if minor superstitions in our midst that suggest the propriety of beginning the task of reformation at home. An occasional glance, for instance, at the stock advertisements of leading journals will convince any one how widespread is the infatuation that believes in spurious offers of advantageous employment. Some of these have, under our own observation, been repeated with little variation for more than twenty years; and we have no doubt that the wily advertisers are able to calculate to a fraction the number and gullibility of their dupes. We have from time to time drawn attention to swindles of this class, as well as to those tempting offers of 'Money to Lend,' which appear with equal regularity in newspaper columns. We are afraid, however, that friendly warning and experience are alike unavailing to stem the mischief. The spread of education itself would appear unable to outstrip the spread of

imposture or the eager credulity that supports it; for superstition merely shifts its ground from time to time, without losing appreciably its original dominion over the human mind.

ODD MISTAKES AND MISCONCEPTIONS.

At the last Christmas race-meeting at Ellerslie, New Zealand, just as the course was being cleared for the event of the day, uproarious sounds of merriment arose behind the saddling paddock, and a number of sailors belonging to Her Majesty's ship *Sapphire* were seen scurrying along, a stalwart blue-jacket in their midst bearing in his brawny arms the form of a woman. No screams resounded above the din created by the abductors; but nothing doubting that the capture was an unwilling one, a gallant newspaper editor and a detective, eager to aid beauty in distress, started in hot pursuit, and after a smart chase across country, overtook the miscreants. To the officer's stern demand for the instant release of their fair prisoner, the tars replied by dropping their prize, whereupon the brave rescuers, rushing forward, tenderly raised the prostrate figure. Judge, however, of their feelings of mortification upon being told by the sailors that having at the interesting game of Aunt Sally, fairly demolished the old lady's pipe, and the accustomed sixpence for the adroit achievement not being forthcoming, they had carried off the old lady in reprisal!

For a dressed-up doll to be taken for a lady seems as improbable as that a lawyer should be taken for a thief, but even that has happened—so liable are men to be led away by appearances. Daniel Webster travelling by the night-stage from Baltimore to Washington with no companion save the driver, contemplated that worthy's forbidding features with a very uneasy mind. He had nearly reasoned his suspicious fear away, when they came to the dark woods between Bladensburg and Washington, and Webster felt his courage oozing out of his finger-ends as he thought what a fitting place it was for murder. Suddenly the driver turned towards him and gruffly demanded his name. It was given. Then he wanted to know where he was going.

'To Washington; I am a senator,' said Daniel, expecting his worst thoughts were near realisation.

The driver grasped him by the hand, saying: 'How glad I am, mister, to hear that. I've been properly scared for the last hour; for when I looked at you, I felt sure you were a highway-man.'

Upon another occasion a young gentleman accosted a stately looking personage at a Washington wedding reception with: 'Good-evening; I'm delighted to see you; we have not met since we parted in Mexico.'

Ignoring the outstretched hand, the gentleman addressed said: 'I fear you have the advantage of me.'

'Why, is it possible you don't recollect me?' exclaimed the mortified young fellow. 'Certainly I was much younger when I was in Mexico with my father.'

'To tell the truth,' said the other, 'my remembrances of ever being in Mexico are very indistinct.'

'Are you not Sir Edward Thornton?' inquired the puzzled one, beginning to suspect there was

a mistake somewhere; a suspicion becoming a certainty when the reply came: 'By no means; I am Judge Poland, of Vermont.'

A few nights after this rebuff, the youth happened to be at another party, and seeing the judge there, made up to him, and after a word or two about the weather, observed: 'That was an awkward blunder of mine the other evening, to take you for old Thornton!'

'And whom do you take me for now, may I ask?' was the reply.

'Why,' said he, feeling rather bewildered by the other's manner, 'you told me you were Judge Poland, of Vermont.'

'On the contrary, sir, my name is Thornton,' was the annihilating response.

The victim to this case of awkward duality was not so much to be pitied as his fellow-countryman Slimmer, who fared worse from a similar mistake that was none of his making. Slimmer, a modest young bachelor, peeping into the ladies' waiting-room at a railway station, found a pair of plump arms round his neck, a lady's head resting lovingly on his manly bosom, and half-a-dozen youngsters of nicely graduated sizes clasping his legs, tugging at his coat-tails, and crying 'Papa!' at the top of their voices. While the half-strangled victim was struggling to disentangle himself from his affectionate surroundings, a gentleman rushed into the waiting-room, took the situation in at a glance, floored the innocent Slimmer with his carpet-bag, and then sat upon him. When he came to himself he was in bed in the infirmary, a bruised and battered bachelor; and all he got for his pains was a grumbling apology from his assailant for the unfortunate mistake his wife had made. The common lot of sufferers from the mistakes of such over-hasty folk.

Jealous-minded people are particularly prone to misconceptions involving serious results. The captain of a schooner trading between San Francisco and Mexico left his wife in a tenement house in San Francisco. He had been away some twelve months, when one night as his wife was nursing the baby of a neighbour, the door of her room opened and she saw her husband standing looking at her. She rose to greet him; but repulsing her with an oath, he turned on his heel and was gone, leaving her to cry herself to sleep. A knock at the door awoke her. Before she could reach it, her husband was in the room, his hand at her throat. Dragging her shrieking to the window, he would have thrown her from it; but her cries had drawn a crowd in front of the house, and the unhappy woman managed to extricate herself from his strong grasp, only to feel a knife enter her flesh, and to fall senseless to the ground. The infuriated seaman made for the stairway, where he was met by a crowd of men. Threatening to shoot the first who came near him, he smashed in a door of a room, jumped through a window, and although pursued, reached the Chinese quarter, and was lost in its labyrinths. The occupant of the room through which he had dashed so unceremoniously, hearing the commotion without comprehending it, sprang out of bed and fired a shot; upon which somebody outside in the hall fired another. 'Lynch him!' was the cry; and in a very short time the guiltless occupant of the room was under a lamp-post, and would have been

dangling from it but for the intervention of the people about, who assured the excited mob that the actual assailant of the woman was already beyond reach. The woman was not killed; but whether her hasty mate discovered his mistake and atoned for it, is not recorded.

Not so tragical in consequence was another instance of jumping to conclusions. A blushing damsel of forty summers or so entered the town-clerk's office at Wheeling, West Virginia, and asked for a license. The clerk took down her name and address and asked for that of 'the other party.' 'Faithful; he lives with me,' said the applicant. The clerk eyed her curiously, but keeping his thoughts to himself, filled up the paper and handed it over. The lady glanced at it, shrieked out 'Monster!' and swept out of the office, leaving the offender dumfounded at the explosion; till it flashed upon his mind that possibly a dog license, not a marriage license, was what the spinster wanted.

Equally unhappy in interpreting a lady's meaning was a timid young man of Titusville. Calling upon a pretty girl one evening, she said: 'I want to propose to you'—

'You are very kind,' gasped the alarmed visitor; 'but I am not worthy of such happiness; in fact none of our family are marrying people—besides, my income is limited, and I have to meet a friend, and I'm afraid I'll be late.' He was making his exit without waiting to put on his overcoat, through the door of a cupboard.

'Why,' said the young woman, 'I wanted to propose to you to accompany me as far as Main Street; that was all.'

'Oh, in that case,' answered the relieved gentleman, 'I shall be only too happy.'

Ladies should eschew ambiguous expressions, and ambiguous actions for that matter. A lady visiting a great public library for the first time, grateful for the assistance rendered her by an assistant-librarian, slipped half-a-crown into his hand; of course the gentleman immediately returned it whence it came; and by-and-by had the pleasure of overhearing one of his fellows say to another: 'Well, I saw it all, but can't make out whether he was making love to the lady or the lady to him: but they were squeezing each other's hands!'

Mr Sayre of Lexington was troubled with a lip. One day the overseer of one of his farms came to headquarters to say he wanted some porkers. 'Very well,' said Mr Sayre. 'Go and buy four or five throwth and pigth, and put them on the farm.'

The man inquired if he should take the money with him to pay for them.

'No,' said Sayre; 'they all know me. Thend them here, and I'll pay.'

In a fortnight's time the overseer reappeared with the information that he had been all over the country, but could not get more than nine hundred pigth.

'Nine hundred pigth!' exclaimed his employer. 'Who told you to buy nine hundred pigth?'

'Why, you did, sir,' said the overseer. 'You told me to buy four or five thousand pigs; and I tried to do it.'

'I did no thuth thing,' said Sayre; 'I told you to buy four or five throwth and their little pigth; a pretty meth you've made of it!'

Among the many good stories told by Colonel

Stuart in his *Reminiscences of a Soldier*, are the two following. A sentry at Chatham, when the captain of the guard questioned him as to his orders, replied: 'My orders are, sir, if a fire broke out, I'm to take my musket and shoot the nearest policeman.' The officer suggested he had made some mistake, but the soldier stuck to his text; and with 'I pity the policeman,' the captain of the guard walked on without giving the correct instruction: 'If a fire breaks out, fire your musket, and alarm the nearest policeman.'—A Scotch subaltern at Gibraltar was one day on guard with another officer, who falling down a precipice, was killed. He made no mention of the accident in his guard report, leaving the addendum, 'N.B. Nothing extraordinary since guard-mounting,' standing without qualification. Some hours after the brigade-major came to demand an explanation, saying: 'You say, sir, in your report, "Nothing extraordinary since guard-mounting," when your brother-officer, on duty with you, has fallen down a precipice four hundred feet and been killed.' 'Weel, sir,' replied he, 'I dinna think there's onything extraordinary in it: if he'd faun doon a precipice four hundred feet and no been killed, I should hae thought it vary extraordinary indeed, and wad hae put it doon in my report.'

Taking things too literally is a fertile cause of amusing blunders. Two costermongers claiming proprietorship of one donkey, went to the Westminster county court to get the dispute decided. After hearing a part of the evidence, the judge said they had better settle the case out of court during the adjournment for luncheon. Upon the court reopening the defendant told His Honour it was all right; the donkey was his. Turning to the plaintiff, the judge saw his personal appearance was altered for the worse; but before he could put any questions, the defendant went on to say that they had found a quiet yard to settle it in, as His Honour had suggested. He had been rather rough on the plaintiff, but couldn't help it; they had only half an hour to pull it off in, and plaintiff was a much tougher customer than he looked to be. The explanation was conclusive, if not quite satisfactory to the court, and the donkey became the prize of the victor in the fight.

'Come up to the Capitol while we are in session, and I'll give you a seat on the floor of the House,' said a member of Congress to one of his supporters, who called upon him in Washington.

'Wall, no; I thank you,' said the West Virginian; 'poor as I am, I always manage to have a cheer to sit on at home, and I ha'n't come here to sit on the floor.'

A doctor, called in for the second time just in time to save the life of a man who during fits of intoxication was given to dosing himself with laudanum, rated his patient roundly for a good-for-nothing scoundrel, who, if he really intended to kill himself, should cut his throat and have done with it. One night the doctor's bell was pulled. Putting his head out of window, he saw the self-poisoner's wife, and heard her call out: 'He has done it, doctor.' 'Done what?' asked he. 'John has taken your sensible advice,' replied the woman; 'he has cut his throat, and will save you further trouble!'

The American poet must have been either very angry or very much amused, when his note to a friend, 'Come and see me; I am at

Barnum's—meaning the hotel of that name in New York, elicited the answer: 'I am sorry you are going to exhibit yourself. If you had stuck to literature you would have made your mark and fortune. Whereabouts is the show now?' Ill-natured people might suspect the mistake was wilfully made. We should be sorry to suppose anybody capable of thinking the same respecting the extraordinary misconception under which an eminent divine laboured at a dinner-party. He was so dull and silent, that the lady next him expressed her fear that he was unwell. 'To tell the truth,' said he, 'I am not quite the thing; I have a presentiment that a serious illness is hanging over me—a peculiar numbness all down my right side seems to forebode paralysis; for I have been pinching my right leg all dinner-time, and can elicit no responsive feeling whatever; the limb seems dead.' 'If that is all,' said his fair neighbour, with a good-natured smile, 'you need not alarm yourself: the leg you have been pinching all the evening belongs to me!'—Honi soit qui mal y pense.

A FEW FRENCH NOTES.

OUR lively neighbours, as journalists still sometimes delight to designate the practical, money-getting French of post-imperial days, have learned much in the stern school of adversity. Saddled with a weight of taxation that might crush the spirit and cripple the energies of a more robust race, they shew wonderful elasticity in developing new and unexpected sources of national wealth, and leave no stone unturned the turning of which may yield a profit.

If there was one branch of industry the revival of which seemed hopeless, it was the home manufacture of kelp, virtually driven out of the market by South American barilla. At its best the kelp trade had but helped the inhabitants of the Hebrides, the western Highlands, and other barren shores, to eke out a scanty livelihood by burning the sea-weed that the waves washed to their feet; while the preparation was primitive enough to have dated from the days of Ossian's shadowy heroes. Science, however, embodied in the form of M. Emile Moride of Nantes, has seriously taken in hand the task of utilising the heaps of wreck-weed that strew the bleak Breton coast, so as to derive the highest return for labour and capital invested. With the aid of a portable furnace, a ventilator or set of bellows for continuous blast, and two wheelbarrows, M. Moride provides for the cooking of his raw material. The furnace is built of dry stones, wrapped round in fresh wet weed, and is supplied with apertures which promote the rapid cooling of the 'sea-weed charcoal,' so called. The ventilator insures quick combustion; but the beauty of the process is that the bromium and iodine, apt, in the old-fashioned method, to be lost through over-roasting, are now preserved. There are at Noirmoutier alone two hundred of these furnaces at work, producing two million gallons of carbonised weed. Each furnace earns its annual fifteen or twenty pounds sterling, supplying as it does soda, potash, and other chemicals to the wholesale druggist, along with phosphates and salts of lime invaluable to the farmer. The pecuniary advantage over the ancient system is roughly estimated at sixty per cent.

France, which exports so enormous a number of eggs, is naturally desirous to content her chief customers, ourselves, by sending over the fragile freight in good preservation. Rubbing the shells with butter, lard, or moistened gum is the mode hitherto practised, but the grocer's stores have never quite rivalled the fresh products of the hen-yard. They may do so now, if we are careful to follow the advice of M. Durand, the Blois chemist. He coats over the shells of his new-laid eggs with silicate of soda, lays them separately to dry, being heedful that no speck of surface remains accessible to air, and consequently to decay, and stows them, for a year if required, in a cupboard. M. Sace of Neufchâtel, a Swiss chemist, not a French one, is reported to achieve as much by the help of paraffine.

Should we have the ill-fortune to be half-drowned, suffocated by unwholesome gases or vitiated air, or to fall down in a fit, Dr Woillez is ready with his new apparatus for artificial respiration. The patient's person, all but the head, is placed in a cylinder of iron, from which one stroke of a powerful pump extracts the air; the lungs and chest of the sufferer expanding as the vacuum is formed. Eighteen such mechanical breathings can be produced in the minute, and at each of these a quart of air—double the quantity inspired in normal health—rushes in to oxygenate the blood. The *spirophore* is beyond all doubt a potent agent in serious cases, but some cautious surgeons have expressed fears as to the secondary results which might attend its use.

Nothing but praise can be bestowed upon the successful efforts of M. Lenoir to construct a looking-glass which should neither grow yellow, and give us back a bilious presentment of ourselves, as silvered mirrors do, nor destroy the health of the workmen, as was the case in the old process of mercurial amalgamation. The new glasses are backed with silver, washed with quicksilver certainly, but in solution not in vapour, and therefore innocuous to those who handle it.

Alcohol, as we know, can be distilled from almost anything; but Apothecary-Major Ballard, of the Chercell Hospital, in Algeria, deserves some notice for finding out that Barbary figs, so called, will yield it in profusion and of excellent quality. The stoniest tracts of North Africa are indeed dappled with the flaming red blossoms of the prickly pear or cactus, and the fruit, guarded by its thorny envelope, can be had for the gathering. One ton and a half of these wild figs will give about sixteen gallons of colourless alcohol, at eighty-five degrees, and with a *kirschwasser* flavour. The same weight of beetroot yields but fifteen gallons of the far weaker spirit in common commercial demand; while beetroot, an exhausting crop, can only be grown on the best and most highly cultivated land.

The most enthusiastic advocates of ballooning would have hesitated to declare that submarine surveys were within the province of the aeronaut. Such, however, seems to be the case, since M. Daruof and his companion going up in a balloon, on the twenty-fifth of last August, at Cherbourg, and being at an altitude of five thousand feet, were amazed to see beneath them, with startling distinctness, every rock, fissure, and depression at the bottom of the sea. And yet the sea opposite Cape

Lévy, where the aerial voyagers obtained this bird's-eye-view, has an average depth of above two hundred feet. So limpid did the water appear that the under-currents were perceptible, whilst nothing would have been easier than to sketch or map the bottom of the sea.

A novel and perhaps a practically useful property of madder, hitherto only known as the active principle of a red dye, has been found out by M. de Rostaing. Meat covered with a layer of dry madder powder defies decomposition. It dries, however, slowly, wasting by desiccation so much that in the course of months it is reduced to less than half its weight. A more economical means of preserving meat is that employed at Buenos Ayres, whence beef, mutton, and even entire animals are constantly forwarded, in a state of perfect conservation, to Antwerp and Havre. The solution in which the meat is steeped contains borax and boric acid, saltpetre and a little salt, borax being the prime agent. The experiments of M. Dumas prove that borax destroys the soluble atmospheric leavens which would otherwise promote decay; and so far so good. But another *savant*, M. Peligot, who has dosed the plants in his garden with borax and killed them very promptly by so doing, suggests an ugly doubt as to the perfect wholesomeness of meat steeped in borax as an article of diet.

In spite of all the progress that has been made in electric science since first Volta put together his 'crown of cups,' a perfect galvanic battery is yet to seek. M. Onimus has done something towards this in availing himself of the virtues of the new, tough, and supple material which bears the name of parchment-paper. Every electrician knows that the great theoretical merits of Professor Daniell's 'constant' battery are counterbalanced by the trouble, care, and annoyance which it entails. All double liquid batteries have hitherto proved bulky, vexatious, and expensive; but M. Onimus simplifies matters by using parchment-paper instead of a porous cell, the copper spiral encircling the parchment, which is wrapped around the cylinder of zinc, and the pair of elements being simply plunged into a solution of sulphate of copper.

M. Leclanché, whose battery has for years past set in motion half the electric bells of Europe, has put what he considers the finishing touches to his well-known invention. He now, to compose his negative element, adds to his mixture of peroxide of manganese resin and hard gas-charcoal finely powdered, about four per cent. of the bisulphate of potassium, wedges the mass in a steel mould capable of enduring enormous pressure, and brings it first to a dull red-heat, and then under the action of the hydraulic press. We are assured that one cell of the improved Leclanché battery can heat a platinum wire to redness. A single element of Grove's or Bunsen's arrangement can do no more than this; and the result is the more creditable to the ingenious Frenchman that his is a 'constant' battery, excited by one fluid (the muriate of ammonia), and in which the consumption of zinc, always an important item, has been reduced to a minimum.

What we call vegetable isinglass, and the Chinese by the name of *thao*, and which has hitherto been derived from Eastern Asia, is now extracted from French sea-weed, and made useful in French

factories. It is in its crude state a yellowish gelatine, which the Industrial Society of Rouen has, after repeated experiments, succeeded in converting into what bids fair to be the best sizing for cotton cloths ever known. Macerated in water for twelve hours, boiled for fifteen minutes, strained, and stirred till it is cold, the *thao* gives a clear solution, which does not again become a jelly, and which can be laid cold upon any textile fabric, and left to dry. One invaluable property it has, since it defies, at common temperatures, damp and mildew; and is therefore already being applied to give lustre, not only to Rouen prints and Mulhouse muslins, but to the woollens of Puteaux and the silks of Lyons.

Ozone, the newest and the least stable of the gases, has recently been made to do good service in the sick-room. It makes short work with those miasmata and organic impurities of vitiated air which the Italians describe by the expressive name of malaria, and which every physician knows to be among the most baneful influences with which the convalescent patient, whose tenure of life is not yet quite assured, has to contend. A mixture should be made of permanganate of potash, peroxide of manganese, and oxalic acid, in equal parts, and two large spoonfuls with some water put into a plate and placed on the floor of the sick-chamber. Care should be taken, however, to remove steel fenders and fire-irons, and to cover up brass door-handles, since ozone will rust all metals meaner than gold and silver.

AUTUMN IN THE WOODS.

EVERY hollow full of ferns,
Turning yellow in their turns;
Straggling brambles fierce and wild,
Yielding berries to the child;
Oakballs tumbling from the tree,
Beech-nuts dropping silently.
Hosts of leaves come down to die,
Leaving openings to the sky;
Bluebells, foxgloves, gone to seed,
Everything to death decreed;
Nothing left of flowers or buds:
Such is Autumn in the woods.

And so is there an Autumn known
To the heart. It feels alone,
Fearing its best days are past;
Sees the future overcast;
Fond acquaintance broken through,
Friends departed, friends untrue;
Human flowers cold and dead
Covered by a grassy bed;
Hopes, late blossoms putting out,
Withering soon, and flung about
By cruel winds; dread doubts and fears
Finding vent in sudden tears;
Yes, there is an Autumn known
To some hearts thus left, alone.

Yet, there's this thought after all—
Ferns may fade and leaves may fall,
Hearts may change or prove untrue,
All may look as these woods do—
Though sad Autumn here is given,
Spring-time awaits the just in heaven.

A. B.

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